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DECEMBER 15, 2022 | VOLUME 13 | ISSUE 24

YOUR DONATION BENEFITS THE VENDORS.
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Ways to engage your friends and family in the housing conversation this holiday season. **Page 4**

FELICIA
WILBERT
#234



ASK YOUR VENDOR:
HOW DO YOU
CELEBRATE THE
HOLIDAYS?
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GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.



Washtenaw County Daytime Warming Center does just that, and so much more. **page 6**

THIS PAPER WAS BOUGHT FROM

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@groundcovernews, include vendor name and vendor #

from the **DIRECTOR'S DESK**

Twenty-three issues ago I wrote the first version of this column: "From the Director's Desk." In that January 1, 2022 issue I introduced our new publication cycle and how that small but mighty change would impact the organization. As we wrap up this volume's last issue, it is tempting to look ahead to 2023 and get to planning for the new year. Yet, change without reflection may not be growth — just something different.

This year many changes occurred at Groundcover News. The transition to publishing twice a month allowed us to say "Yes!" to more projects, reporting and collaborations. We were proud to launch columns such as "The Storytelling Project," "Truth or Lies," "Meet My Pet Pal" and "What's New at the Library?" We also published more themed issues such as the Vendor Week edition in February, Pride Month edition in June and Homelessness Awareness Week edition in November — in addition to our two \$10 special issues, on local



LINDSAY CALKA
Managing Director

history and on the global street paper movement.

Another big change occurred in July, upon receiving the Jackson Family Social Welfare Grant which funded the freelance writing program that pays cash stipends to Groundcover vendors who write for the paper. You might have noticed the mid-year uptick in vendor writing that has been sustained all the way to now — and hopefully will continue to grow in the future.

On the sales side of things, we reached pre-pandemic circulation

numbers by returning to old territories and expanding the Groundcover community to new places. This year alone we collaborated in running articles from four U-M English classes to bring more students into the street paper movement. We also made strides in having consistent sales in Ypsilanti.

Throughout all the hard work of newspaper writing and sales, we had fun too. From field trips to Toledo Streets (street paper in Toledo, Ohio) and the printing press in Tecumseh, to organization-wide celebrations for our awesome volunteers and Vendor Appreciation Week, we made a bunch of memories this year together as a team.

Although I said I was going to focus

on reflection not planning, I will close out this message with a sneak preview of what's to come next year. Starting December 30, 2022, Groundcover News will be publishing every other Friday — yes, actually *biweekly* this time!

Thank you to the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation for providing the initial funding in January 2022 to make this transition happen, and empowering Groundcover News to continue to grow. Thank you to the new contributors and customers for participating in this community project. And of course, thank you to the Groundcover vendors, volunteers and staff whose commitment to the day-to-day work has made this year one to be proud of!

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF ANN ARBOR

Michigan George L. Jackson and Bessie Florence Hazelton Jackson Social Welfare Fund



**Ann Arbor Area
Community Foundation**

GROUNDCOVER NEWS

CREATING **OPPORTUNITY** AND A
VOICE FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE WHILE TAKING
ACTION TO END HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY.

Groundcover News, a 501(c)(3) organization, was founded in April 2010 as a means to empower low-income persons to make the transitions from homeless to housed, and from jobless to employed.

Vendors purchase each copy of our regular editions of Groundcover News at our office for 50 cents. This money goes towards production costs. Vendors work selling the paper on the street for \$2, keeping all income and tips from each sale.

Street papers like Groundcover News exist in cities all over the United States, as well as in more than 40 other countries, in an effort to raise awareness of the plight of homeless people and combat the increase in poverty. Our paper is a proud member of the International Network of Street Papers.

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1/4	\$200.00	\$265.00	5 X 6.25
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ASK YOUR VENDOR

How do you celebrate the holidays?

I spend it with my family: my grandson, my daughter and my mother. We like to watch movies together.

— Felicia Wilbert, #234

Tons of parties, snowball-fights, carolling ... typical winter stuff.

— Tre McAlister, #519

I celebrate with my family in Warren.

— Gary Leverett, #554

I take a break! The world shuts down, so it's easier to do that.

— Ken Parks, #490

I like to visit my family in New York and California. We don't celebrate with gifts but with love!

— James Tennant, #174

Food! Sometimes I go to Mercy House for Christmas.

— Beverly Boss #583

I watch sports — the football bowl games are the best. Go Blue!

— Mike Jones #113

We're going to Las Vegas!

— Joe Woods, #103 and Teresa Basham, #570

I like to sell papers on Christmas Eve and Christmas.

— Justen White, #543

No buses run, so I have to be at home. I usually watch good movies, cook a good meal, relax, listen to music, and talk to family on the phone.

— Denise Shearer, #485

Normally I don't, but this year I am going to be with my mom and brother in Oakland County!

— Paul Wertz, #577

What would YOU ask?

If you have a question you would like Groundcover vendors to answer in this column, email us at contact@groundcovernews.com

We will be featuring vendor responses in future issues.

Holidays and homelessness in Ann Arbor

I would like to start by saying, to all homeless and shut-out people, I hope that you find peace within yourself during the holiday season and that you find housing soon.

Family reminds us of the holidays and the joy and/or pain this season brings.

This time of the year is not the best of times for everyone. For many of us this time of year we look forward to quality time with loved ones and family.

Homeless is the family of the homeless. When homeless, one must realize those of you at the Delonis Center (Shelter), Mercy



MIKE JONES
Groundcover vendor No. 113

House, Peace House, or any one of the warming centers, those around you are your extended family members.

Find it in your heart to do

something nice for one of your family members in the trenches and struggle of homelessness with you. Be a friend to all and an enemy to none this holiday season. When all hell's breaking loose around you try to find peace within and spread that peace, for blessed are the peacemakers.

For those who are housed and are fortunate to be in the company of family and loved ones, I wish you all the best this holiday season and humbly ask all who read this article to take time to soul-search and show love to the unfortunate homeless and shut-out.

Things that make us feel at peace

I like to think of me and others feeling at peace. One thing that makes me feel at peace is knowing that God and Jesus love everybody. It makes me feel at peace knowing that I can talk to God and Jesus anytime.

God and Jesus made nature for us to enjoy and that makes people feel at peace. There's a lot of things to feel at peace about and I like to focus on those things. For example, it's peaceful seeing pretty colors around us every day: artwork that people make, when trees and pretty flowers are in season, even the colorful houses and cars that people drive. The lobbies of the buildings



DENISE SHEARER
Groundcover vendor No. 485

we go into have pretty colors too.

It's also peaceful being blessed to get meals and clothing when you

need it — like at churches, Peace House, warming centers, and the Delonis Center. I feel very blessed when eating a meal with my boyfriend Richard and when my sister brings clothing and treats to me at home, especially for the holidays.

You feel at peace when you have friends that you know and people that you don't know who still love you. I love my family and friends who love me; and the people who drive the bus for A-Ride and the librarians at the library and people who do volunteer work — the work they do, it's showing love to people. I just love people.

Reflections after Scott Ritter

The aspiration for peace runs deep in the human heart. "Wars are fought to establish peace ..." so the story goes. The Ann Arbor Coalition Against War has roots going back to the Vietnam War and every war since. The Vietnamese call it the American War.

We cannot find a good war, especially in the nuclear weapons era. It has not slowed the war machine and AACAW recognizes that information is at the center of all wars. Conflicts over resources, markets and labor pools are pieces of investor strategies to keep the creation of wealth moving from the Earth and workers up to the supreme



KEN PARKS
Groundcover vendor No. 490

elites. Once it was the 1%, now to even smaller numbers of the real ruling class.

On the first three days of December we were fortunate to have Scott

Ritter here, brought into town by AACAW. His book, "Disarmament in the time of Perestroika," sold well and will enlighten many about his journey to the truth. Many people remember him as the weapons inspector whistleblower on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. His 30 years of service as a military intelligence officer continues based on his initial vow to defend the constitution and serve the people. Of course, the government tried to silence him; accusations were made and a legal system well known for its

see **RITTER** page 5 ➡

Ways to engage friends and family in the homelessness and housing conversation this holiday season

ISRAEL BAYER
INSP North America

The notion that individuals experiencing homelessness are at fault for their own experience and are inherently bad people is a common thread in many cultures. It crosses over political ideologies and is a commonly-held belief by both liberals and conservatives. It's rooted in generations of religious and neoliberal stereotypes, structural racism and myths about people experiencing homelessness and poverty.

"When housed people see homeless people in their day-to-day lives, they can't ignore the problem," says Erica Barnett, a long-time journalist in Seattle. "Proximity breeds empathy in some people, and hatred in others. Sometimes people have empathy at first, then observe over time that the problem continues to get worse and throw their hands up in the air not believing the problem can be solved. This involves a process of dehumanizing other people to some extent. People stop thinking of people experiencing homelessness as actual human beings."

"Homelessness runs on a narrative of fear and exclusion. It's primal and it gets exploited," says Tim Harris, a longtime housing advocate and street paper veteran. "It doesn't matter what the facts are, or that we've had an ongoing housing crisis. If you don't have alternative voices in the community to combat these viewpoints, fear-based narratives will win almost every time. Over time, people start to believe that homeless people are the actual problem instead of the lack of living wage jobs and the high cost of housing. It's a very active, ongoing and dangerous narrative in American life."

Blaming individuals for their own homelessness also deflects any sense of collective responsibility for actually solving the housing crisis. While many people believe that providing vulnerable citizens with a safe place to call home is essential to maintaining a healthy society and providing future generations with the opportunity at a better life, many citizens don't know how to actually engage with the issue in a way where society can see a measurable difference.

Here are some basic ways to think about reframing the conversation about homelessness and housing when talking with your peers, friends and family this holiday season.

The experience of homelessness is

not a reflection of an individual's choice or character — it's a circumstance that happens to groups of people when society and governments don't provide the necessary social safety nets and housing to support people. Millions of people don't choose homelessness over a safe place to call home.

One of the most fundamental things we can collectively come to understand is that homelessness is not a permanent condition for individuals or families, but something human beings experience over a period of time.

The reasons for people's homelessness are many. A war veteran living on the street with an addiction or a traumatic brain injury. A mother and child fleeing a domestic violence situation, or a young transgender or gay kid who has been kicked out of a conservative home with no place to go. It could be an elderly woman living in her car who can no longer afford an apartment on a fixed income. A mentally ill person who doesn't have adequate mental or physical healthcare. A suburban family who lost a home to foreclosure. Individuals and families displaced from a hurricane or wildfires, or a refugee fleeing economic hardship or political repression or a war-torn country.

Regardless of people's circumstances, housing for our most vulnerable citizens is a public infrastructure needed to support a healthy society. We don't think about things like our transportation systems, bridges, parks, police and fire departments as charity and/or a government hand out. Housing is no different. Everything we do in life starts with having a safe place to call home.

The homeless and housing crisis today is a direct result of the high cost of housing, the lack of living wage jobs, and the lack of affordable housing stock for millions of individuals and families living on a fixed income, or no income at all. It's also the direct result of generations (centuries) of discrimination and structural racism that has used housing as a weapon against the poor, mostly people of color.

What keeps us from having the resources to support real housing justice remains corporate welfare, and not taxing the rich and/or not prioritizing housing in our federal budgets.

That's all great, but what more can

I do to support the housing justice movement in my community?

Supporting the housing justice movement in your community can look like a lot of different things. Maybe it's working to be a vocal supporter of a local shelter or homeless services in a smaller community that historically has rejected such investments or being an outspoken advocate for affordable housing projects in your neighborhood, and city.

It could be writing your elected officials and communicating that housing for our most vulnerable populations is a top tier issue for you as a constituent.

It could mean researching and financially supporting organizations working towards and engaging in work to advance housing justice agendas.

Maybe it's finding ways to approach or interject and change the hearts and minds of the people in your social circles who may put down people experiencing homelessness or project a false narrative about the larger issue.

It might be introducing your kids (or family members) to giving a donation or doing volunteer work in the community by supporting organizations working to provide people with a safe place to call home. Did you know when young people are taught about giving and volunteering at a young age the likelihood of them doing so for the rest of their life skyrockets? Don't be afraid to talk to your kids about things like compassion and empathy, and why issues like homelessness exist. (You can start by using the talking points from above.)

Other ways you might think of to show your solidarity is by spreading the word about your local street paper or about your favorite housing justice

organization through your social media network.

You can also buy someone on the streets a cup of coffee and recognize that they are a human being by simply saying hello. I personally carry around a case of water, some hand warmers and a box of granola bars in the trunk of my car to offer people I might see struggling when I'm out and about. This is something any one of us can do.

At the end of the day, the best thing we can do for folks on the streets is to not give up on people. We mustn't ever give up on the idea that housing is a necessary component of society for our most vulnerable citizens, regardless of the political atmosphere or circumstance we collectively might find ourselves in.

"Offering compassion without judgment is one of the most challenging things you'll ever do," the late and great housing organizer Genny Nelson from Portland, Oregon once told me. "Keeping at it day after day, week after week and maintaining that compassion will be the hardest. The only way to find the space to carry on is to practice non-violence and to believe in love."

It's true.

Regardless of our own personal experience in life, we all have the opportunity to work towards choosing love, and empathy and compassion and non-violence over hate and fear and judgment and exclusion. We must continue our long fight to seek justice in our communities, always.

Housing remains a human right.

Israel Bayer is an award-winning writer and housing advocate and works with the International Network of Street Papers. Courtesy of the International Network of Street Papers

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➔ **RITTER** from page 3

labyrinth of injustice did great damage to his life and to the public discourse. We needed to hear from him now more than ever. The three days he spoke were all experiences of heartfelt struggle to bring good sense into the commons.

Following Ritter's event at the AADL, I conversed with a friendly son, whose name is Beckett, and his father. My apologies to the father for poor memory of names. The father made the essential observation that when we speak from the heart we can find the balance of brain intelligence and gut intuition. Father and son supported me writing "Begin at start and tune in to your heart," which will be published in Ground-

cover News next month.


I know that Scott Ritter is a living example of "coming with a clean heart," as all indigenous centered cultures know. Scott's conviction and prison time is a story of persistence and bravery, in which he emerges from prison as a more complete human being. His encounters with prison gang culture educated all involved — even the parole system wanted him for outreach education. Despite the bureaucratic compliance demanding that the innocent plead guilty to prove their therapy is working, Scott persisted until he gained freedom from prison after three and a half years.

War culture hurts everyone, as most veterans already know.

I am known as the "pause for a

breath guy." Breathing with your heart is a simple and necessary approach for peace of mind and a culture of peace. It is also necessary in the age of imperialism to dismantle the war machine and the hydra head of financialization.

I view AACAW as part of a movement bringing peace as the healing process for our physical, social and Earth bodies. Everything is connected in our everyday life. We have a fresh moment now in which to breathe again. Grant your blessings that we build this kind of peace culture in every moment. AACAW has a vigil at Liberty and Fifth by the Post Office on Fridays at 5:30 pm. Visit annarborcoalitionagainstawar.org. We want peace.



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Washtenaw County Daytime Warming Center does just that, and so much more

In its ninth year, the Daytime Warming Center is now open for the 2022-2023 winter season. The most profound difference this year is the addition of the Ypsilanti Freighthouse as a second location of the program which is run by M.I.S.S.I.O.N — the Michigan Itinerant Shelter System Interdependent Out of Necessity — in cooperation with the Delonis Center, and under the leadership of Sheri Wander, Ben Foster and Peatmoss.

The DTWC holds space for friends experiencing homelessness to be out of the elements during the winter. The center offers limited amounts of food, coffee, supplies and necessities. The DTWC also offers the safety and comfort of knowing you belong. There is an atmosphere of loving kindness exuding from volunteers and friends alike. The chief difference between this center and government-funded centers is that the volunteers are allowed to be friends with the people they serve.

Volunteers come from all walks of life — students, social justice activists, members of the faith community and everyday citizens. There is a training



JIM CLARK
Vendor manager

that volunteers go through including Narcan handling and conflict de-escalation.

Why is the DTWC necessary? “The warming center exists to fill a need. Pure survival. People need a safe, warm place to be during the day (during the winter, daytime temperatures in Michigan can frequently be below zero during the day). Delonis isn’t able to provide that. What is great about it is that it’s not a government entity — members of the homeless community organized this program themselves,” said Ben Foster.

The Ypsilanti DTWC is held at the Ypsilanti Freighthouse (located at 100

Market Place) and is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will be running until the end of March.

The Ann Arbor DTWC rotates locations; keep checking the Facebook page for updates (Day Time Warming Center - Washtenaw County). Currently the Ann Arbor DTWC is open Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is at Trinity Lutheran Church (see chart below).

Both DTWC locations are in dire need of food, supplies, clothing, cash donations, bus tokens (which can be purchased at Blake Transit Center) and volunteers, including people who want to cook. If you are able to spend a few hours playing cards with friends in need, can donate new hiking boots, or are a master chef, there will be something for you to do! If you are interested in volunteering please visit the Facebook page.

Exposure to the winter elements is no joke. As someone who has survived three rounds of hypothermia, two due to being homeless, I can personally tell you that the DTWC has literally saved me from hypothermia,



Ben Foster and Eric Kopchia enjoy each other's company over some coffee at the DTWC at Journey of Faith Church. Photo credit for above and cover image: **Cynthia Price.**

frostbite, illness and discomfort. Anything you can do to help is appreciated and much needed. Even if it's just telling someone on the street about DTWC.

Location	Address	Dates
Ypsilanti Freighthouse	100 Market Place Ypsilanti	November 7 to March 31, 2023
Zion Lutheran Church	1501 W. Liberty Ann Arbor	November 14 to December 2, 2022
Journey of Faith	1900 Manchester, Ann Arbor	December 5 to December 16, 2022
Trinity Lutheran Church	1400 W. Stadium Blvd Ann Arbor	December 19 to December 30, 2022
First Baptist Church	517 E. Washington Street Ann Arbor	January 2 to February 3, 2023
First Congregational Church (M, W, F)	608 E. Williams Street Ann Arbor	February 4 to February 28, 2023 Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays Only
St. Mary's Student Parrish (T, Th)	331 Thompson Street Ann Arbor	February 4 to February 28, 2023 Tuesdays, Thursdays Only
Delonis Center	312 W. Huron St. Ann Arbor	November 7 to March 31, 2023

Groundcover News gift guide

GROUNDCOVER STAFF

There are only a few more weeks until the gift-giving time of the year. The holiday season is the perfect time to get something unique and meaningful for the people you care about while also making a difference by supporting artists and makers in the community. Or, better yet, treat yourself to one of these awesome items!

For the poet: "The Fold: A Collection of Poetry"

"The Fold" is a work of poetry written by Groundcover vendor La Shawn Courtwright.

In the words of Courtwright, "This collection of poetry speaks to a very common theme of real human experiences, and they are just a small part of mine. I expressed how I felt like an outsider, then realized, it's not always bad to be unusual. Me and my children suffered the utmost tragedy of being separated over my naiveté, and the intentional betrayal of a neighbor I considered a friend.

"For anyone who has had to experience incarceration for any amount of time can understand where I'm coming from in two of these poems. It's when the reality of the utter loneliness of being forcibly ridden of the things that are often taken for granted put you in touch with the peace that you can only find within yourself. I also believe in owning my feelings and not allowing others to trample my trust with lies. These writings are a liberation of all the labels, assumptions and character assassinations that haunted me for so long.

"Even when you may think you have failed, you must keep reaching and know how to grasp opportunity. We all need strength to maintain. I hope that you will discover something within these pages that can help change your life in a positive way."

"The Fold" can be ordered online at blackstonebookstore.com (Ypsilanti Bookstore and Cultural Center).

For the mysterious one: "33333 A Mystery"

Journey into an exciting, breathtaking new mystery 33333. A tale that will have your heart pounding for more!

Dhai's a happily married woman who is faced with the dilemma: should she go to Cairo on an excavation? Or will she return to her birthplace to claim her inheritance? If she claims, is she prepared for all that her inheritance encumbers? A family curse dating back over 100 years. Her mother has been missing in Malaysia for 29 years. Will

Dhai find her mother if she returns to Malaysia? Why is her daughter Nephi singing "33333 mommie watch out for 33333 mommie"?

If you or a loved one have enjoyed Groundcover vendor Felicia Wilbert's mystery column "Truth or Lies," you'll love this new release! "33333 A Mystery" can be purchased online on amazon.com by searching the title and author.

For the artist: Art by Kung Fu Panda

Cindy is a happy-go-lucky creative artist, warm greeter of Ann Arbor, and Groundcover vendor who sells at the Sweetwaters Cafe on Washington Street in downtown A2. Her work is on display at the Groundcover News office in addition to Journey of Faith Church's Art on a Journey gallery.

You can purchase Cindy's art by attending a showing at the Groundcover News office. Email contact@groundcovernews.com if interested to schedule a date and time to shop in person.

For the world traveler: Global Street Paper Movement Edition

On November 18, Groundcover News published a 16-page, color issue covering the global street paper movement. The special issue is chock full of vendor writing and spotlights on different street papers from around the world. The special issue is just \$10 and available for purchase from select Groundcover vendors until we sell out!

For faraway friends: Online subscription to Groundcover News

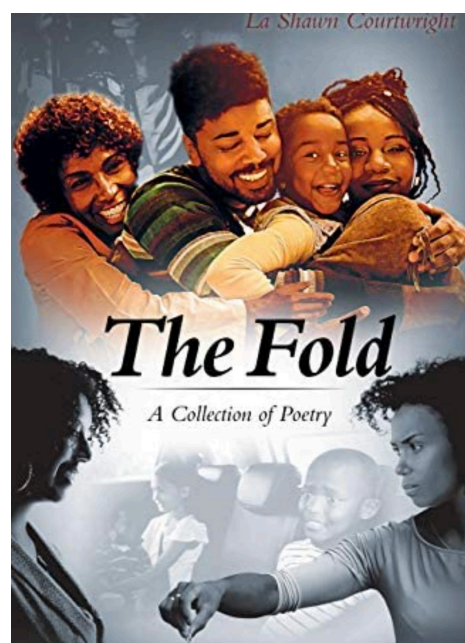
One of Groundcover News' defining qualities is that it is print news that can only be purchased by participating in a human interaction, but for the folks who are not lucky enough to live in an area that has a street paper, we offer online subscriptions to Groundcover News.

To order an online subscription for someone who lives outside of Washtenaw County, visit our website and click the "Donate" button. In the comment box of the online donation, type "Subscription" and the email address it should be sent to. If you would like the funds to go directly to the Groundcover vendor you regularly buy from, please include that information as well. Each issue of the online edition is also \$2.

One year/26 issues: \$52

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Online "Global Street Paper Movement Edition:" \$10



Top: Felicia Wilbert sold copies of her book at the Groundcover Street Wisdom open mic. Photo credit: Jessi Averill. Middle left: Cover of La Shawn Courtwright's poetry book. Middle right: Cover of the Groundcover \$10 special edition on the Global Street Paper Movement. Bottom: Cindy Gere's art includes everything from traditional canvas paintings to buttons and magnets to platform Crocs!

Truth or lies: The Christmas miracle

The children were laughing and the sounds of Christmas music played in the background. "Noel, Noel, the angels did sing."

John Vandella and his wife Anna had been married for nine years. They purchased a house in the community of Bankhead, Georgia on 777 Favior Avenue. They had two children. Annie was seven and Justin was eight years old. John worked as a pharmaceutical medical scientist. Anna was a registered nurse at Loma Linda Hospital.

Every year during the holiday season they would volunteer at the soup kitchen at Saint Andrew's Catholic Church in Bankhead, where dinner was served to homeless and hungry people every day of the week. The church often needed volunteers, and the Vandellas would help all during the holidays. They were blessed and did not want or lack; this was their way of showing gratitude.

Every year Annie and Justin would only ask for one toy. They enjoyed giving toys to children who were in need. They would often say it's better to give than receive. John and Anna were blessed to have children who understood the gift of giving to others.

It was a week before Christmas and John had not found the one toy he wanted to give to his son. John knew he had to leave for work and would not return until Christmas Eve. The pressure he was feeling not finding the G.I. Joe doll, and not having a gift for his son was crushing. He thought that he would find it in Chicago for sure. He had already started inquiring at all the toy shops and thrift stores. However he did not find the doll, only securing a promise that if they came across one they would contact him. He knew how



FELICIA WILBERT
Groundcover vendor No. 234

much his son loved and collected action figures. John searched all the thrift stores, tried online and even put out an ad in the local city news.

Justin had seen an old poster his dad had kept from the 1980s of G.I. Joe. Justin often stated how cool it would be if he had a G. I. Joe to add to his collection. While on business trips John continued to search all the hobby and thrift stores. However, he never found a G.I. Joe. It had been six months and he was always disappointed. Two days before Christmas, John was walking in the downtown center of Chicago and there was a Santa Claus.

John had stopped believing in Santa years ago, of course; he waved and smiled at him. The Santa man got up and proceeded to approach John, asking him what he wanted for Christmas. Santa said, "John, do you believe?" John answered him saying, "I used to believe, now I don't know."

Santa shook his hand and said, "My son, miracles do happen!" and smiled.

John felt weird, like a child learning a new lesson. He said, "Hey Santa, I want a G.I. Joe action figure for my son Justin." Santa winked his right eye and said, "Be blessed and never stop believing," then walked back to his chair.

It was the morning before Christmas and John's flight was delayed, making him return home after the stores were closed. On his flight home he could only feel despair over not getting his son a gift. He could not give in to defeat, so he decided to say a prayer on his flight home.

Praying for a miracle, arriving home later than he had anticipated, he heard his wife ask if he found Justin a gift. John did not know what to say, but reassured her that everything would be fine. Later that evening, after bed, John heard a noise downstairs; he thought it was the children trying to peek at their gifts. He felt so bad not getting Justin his G.I. Joe action figure, He let out a sigh and thought, "God please help me!"

Early the next morning the children ran to the Christmas tree. John's heart

dropped; he did not want to explain about Justin's missing gift. Just when he thought he would have to utter the words of disappointment, he heard his son shouting, "Thanks Dad and Mom, I love my new G.I. Joe!"

"What?!" John thought. "Thank you God I love you."

John went to meet Anna at breakfast. When he arrived in the kitchen, their maid Karalita told him that she picked up the gift he had dropped last night on the porch after returning from the airport. The gift was wrapped and addressed to Justin. She placed it under the tree before leaving. John knew he did not drop a package; he could only think about the prayers and the Santa Claus he met in Chicago. "Could it be him?" he thought, and smiled.



The Christmas family, published December 1, was based on a TRUE story, however the names and places were changed to protect all parties.



By Izzy Hedin-Urrutia

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Bethlehem Church is home of the Groundcover office



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Christmas Eve Services: 5:00 pm & 7:30 pm in Sanctuary

Please visit the church website at: bethlehem-ucc.org for the most up-to-date calendar and event information.



Sunday Worship Time

10:00 am In-person

and via Live Stream and
Radio Broadcast

Sudoku

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6		1		9				
		3	1			7		8
				4		9	2	
		4	2	6	3			
	6	2				1	4	
			4	1	8	2		
	1	8		5				
5		6			2	3		
				3		5		7

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover is a non-profit, and paper vendors are self-employed contractors, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following is our **Vendor Code of Conduct**, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

- Groundcover will be distributed for a voluntary donation. I agree not to ask for more than the cover price or solicit donations by any other means.
- When selling Groundcover, I will always have the current biweekly issue of Groundcover available for customer purchase.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper or selling past monthly issues.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers and refrain from wearing it or other Groundcover gear when engaged in other activities.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other

Groundcover vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff, and other vendors respectfully. I will not “hard sell,” threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor in downtown areas. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.
- I understand that Groundcover strives to be a paper that covers topics of homelessness and poverty while providing sources of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.

If you would like to report a violation of the Vendor Code please email contact@groundcovernews.com or fill out the contact form on our website.

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S	F	M	O	C	K	S	A	S	S	E	M	B	L	Y
D	W	H	S	L	Y	M	O	Q	P	U	P	I	L	O
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Y	H	P	T	L	I	B	R	A	R	Y	G	M	L	R
B	E	Y	P	R	L	E	E	U	G	R	A	N	T	T
O	A	I	T	Z	L	N	R	A	E	B	M	N	K	M
Y	D	E	A	N	I	O	P	M	D	O	E	H	A	A
F	O	R	M	A	T	R	M	G	N	L	S	X	P	S
D	O	N	T	C	E	A	E	M	C	O	E	D	R	T
B	Q	P	O	S	R	Q	K	A	U	E	D	L	O	E
V	A	R	R	C	A	I	N	T	D	H	E	I	V	R
C	P	U	I	A	C	F	B	Y	I	E	G	N	O	G
C	O	A	C	H	Y	D	I	I	G	O	R	E	S	C
C	L	A	S	S	R	O	O	M	S	T	E	S	T	S
M	Y	T	M	O	N	I	T	O	R	U	E	B	B	E

WORD BANK:	Degree	Mocks
Art master	Digs	Monitor
Assembly	Diploma	MSci
BA	Don	PGCE
Beadle	Exam	Poly
Captain	Form	Proctor
Classroom	Games	Provost
Coach	GCSE	Pupil
Co-ed	Grant	Reader
Course	Hall	Swat
Crammer	Head	Term
Crib	Illiteracy	Test
Day boy	Library	Tripos
Dean	Lines	

LOGIC PUZZLES

JAN GOMBART
GROUNDCOVER CONTRIBUTOR

1. If you have two identical balls, one heavier than the other, you can easily determine which is heavier by putting them on opposite pans of a balance scale. Suppose you have nine identical balls, one of which is heavier than the eight others. What is the smallest number of weighings needed to positively identify the odd ball?

2. A camp cook wants to measure four ounces of vinegar out of a jug, but he has only a five-ounce and a three-ounce cup. How can he do it?

Understanding the affordable housing crisis in Metro Ann Arbor and across the United States

The affordable housing crisis is not a fictional narrative. It is a real story of our time, the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Today, higher inflation and the Federal Reserve policy of higher interest rates as a solution strategy is making mortgage interest rates for homeownership and rental housing even more unaffordable. The recent COVID-19 pandemic and its ramifications have kept affordable housing out of reach for poor, lower middle class and many middle class families. The result is a growing number of housing insecure and homeless people in America's metropolitan areas, including Metro Ann Arbor.

Groundcover News in December 2019 reported that the Washtenaw Housing Alliance held a conference titled, "The State of Homelessness in Washtenaw County" at Washtenaw Community College. The conference, held on November 13, 2019 (pre-pandemic), unveiled some key facts. They include the following: 75% of people who qualify for housing assistance never received the support they need; 3,312 people were experiencing homelessness; and there were 135 days on average between entering the local homeless shelter and exiting the shelter.

What is Affordable Housing? Is There a Link Between Housing Insecurity and Poor Health outcomes?

Affordable housing is defined by The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, The National Low-Income Housing Coalition and other affordable housing advocacy groups in a consumption chart whereby a family or an individual spends no more than 30% of their household budget on housing. A team of University of Michigan architects and city planners who wrote an article for "Concentrate Magazine" were cited in the Groundcover article entitled "Rethinking the Ann Arbor Housing Crisis," published in September 2019. They stated, "When it comes to housing you can afford, there are two rules of thumb. Housing should cost no more than 30% of your income, or the combination of housing and commuting to a job should cost no more than about 50%."

For tens of millions of Americans, securing safe, decent and affordable housing is now out of reach, according to a recent NLIHC annual report. The Urban Design team from U-M was



WILL SHAKESPEARE
Groundcover vendor No. 258

asked a key planning and policy question in 2019: "Can Ann Arbor build enough housing to beat the crisis?" Their answer was a resounding "YES!"

In an April 2015 report by the Center for Housing Policy, the staff writers said, "Housing is well documented to be an important social determinant of physical and mental health and well-being." They continued, "In the context of ongoing national and state efforts to reform health care, it is important for policymakers to understand the various pathways through which housing affects health. Affordable housing alleviates crowding and makes more household resources available for health care and healthy food, which leads to better health outcomes."

The 2015 report, still relevant in 2022, also pointed out that high quality housing limits exposure to environmental toxins that impact health. The report stated, "Stable and affordable housing also supports mental health by limiting stressors related to financial burden or frequent moves, or by offering an escape from an abusive home environment."

I must also point out, affordable homeownership can have mental health benefits by offering homeowners control over their environment.

According to the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, "Affordable housing reduces exposure to health problems often associated with older, poorly-maintained housing such as allergens, neurotoxins, lead-based paints, mold and rodents. These hazards can lead to asthma and other respiratory illnesses."

Sadly, COVID-19 has apparently made the physical and mental health of the housing-insecure population worse. The NCHFA report also stated what we have observed throughout the recent COVID-19 pandemic — that lower income households typically spend a greater percentage of their income on housing, potentially impacting health by leaving less money for preventive medical care,

prescription medication and nutritious foods. The NCHFA report concluded with a sobering insight: "Meanwhile, these same households are more likely to face eviction or foreclosure, which can also create long-term physical and mental health repercussions."

Furthermore, the Centers for Disease Control report of March 2, 2017, concurred with earlier reports in saying that homelessness is closely connected to decline in physical and mental health. Specifically, the CDC report stated, "Homeless persons experience high rates of health problems such as HIV infection, alcohol and drug abuse, mental illness, tuberculosis, and other conditions."

Historical Perspective on the U.S. Public Affordable Housing Policy

The National Nurse-Led Consortium, an affordable housing advocacy group, says that "housing is health." They have come up with a public policy blog titled, "A Brief History of Housing Policy in the U.S." This blog by researcher Kevin Leacock, MPH, was published October 29, 2019 — about five months before the official confirmation of the March 2020 COVID-19 Global Pandemic. NNLC reported that "the history of housing policy in the United States includes great achievements that helped millions find affordable housing and improve their dwellings, but it also includes a troubled legacy of racism and inequality that prevented millions more from benefiting from government programs." Leacock continues, "In many cases, racism and segregation were explicitly enshrined in law, and at other times, they were merely accepted practice in implementing the law, ... We still see the effects of these decisions today. One of the biggest lessons we can learn from our housing history is that a fair housing policy must both acknowledge and address the history of racism and segregation in housing."

We encourage our readers to browse through the Groundcover News September 2020 article titled, "Eviction and Racial Discrimination: From Slavery to COVID-19."

Many historians would say that the history of America's inception of public housing or affordable housing started during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The 1934 National Housing Act was a key component of the Federal New Deal programs. The private

The federal government has not been able to increase public housing in more than 22 years.



housing market was not building enough affordable housing for millions of migrants from the South to the North, and millions more who sought refuge in America's major cities from fascist and war-mongering Nazi regimes in Europe. Housing was indeed unaffordable. Because the 1934 Housing Act seemed like it was primarily designed to provide housing only to white middle class and lower middle class families, the Federal government received numerous complaints.

Even the Federal Home Administration loan program was rife with discrimination against Blacks. It favored white families to the detriment of non-white families. FHA left a legacy of segregation, redlining and community disinvestment patterns in predominantly Black neighborhoods.

In response to complaints about discrimination, segregation and racism in Federal housing programs, Congress passed the Housing Act of 1937 which established America's new affordable public housing system. NNLC writers Emily Kane and Justin Gero said that one of the goals was to gradually shift the federal government role from greater involvement in housing construction loans and projects to providing direct loans and incentive support to local government housing authorities and State government administrations.

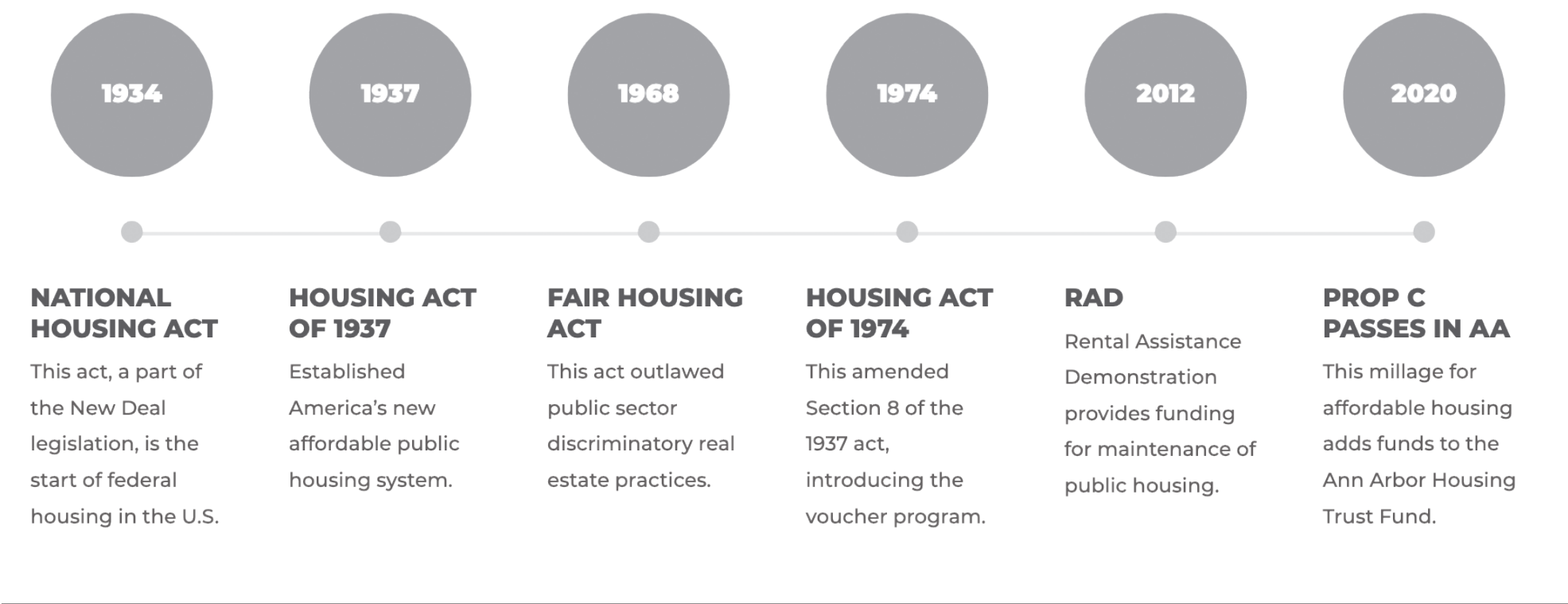
NNLC reported that the Housing Act of 1937 was drafted by Catherine Bauer Wurster, a public housing and urban planning advocate. She became the director of a newly created United States Housing Authority.

The G.I. Bill was considered a major facet of America's affordable housing programs. FDR signed the Bill on June 2, 1944. It created programs to help veterans of World War II with low interest loans.

The Fair Housing Act is also known as the Civil Rights Act of 1968. It was signed by President Lyndon Baines Johnson in April 1968, shortly after the assassination of Martin Luther King.

see **HOUSING** next page ➡

Affordable housing policies: from the White House to Ann Arbor



➡ **HOUSING** from previous page

the goal of this law was “to dismantle systemic racist policies in housing and all aspects of American life.” Discriminatory real estate practices were outlawed.

The Housing Act of 1974 introduced the “Housing Choice Vouchers.” It was an amendment to the Section 8 component of the 1937 Housing Act. With the vouchers, low-income individuals and families could rent a home from private landlords, paying approximately 30% of their income. The Federal government pays the balance of their rent cost. In 1999, Congress passed the Faircloth Amendment. This legislation caps the number of public housing units allowable to the 1999 level.

This means that the Federal government has not been able to increase public housing in more than 22 years. The impact of this restrictive legislation is being felt today in Metro Ann Arbor and across the nation.

In 2012, the Obama administration started a Rental Assistance Demonstration program which was a public-private partnership to provide repairs and maintenance in existing affordable public housing. Other efforts by President Obama to increase affordable public housing stocks failed. However, the programs to help homeless veterans find affordable housing were very popular and received bipartisan support. The succeeding administrations have made little progress on non-veteran programs.

Conclusion

We know that the G.I. Bill signed by

FDR helped many veterans find affordable housing when they came back from World War II. NNLC reported that between 1944 and 1950, the Veterans Administration guaranteed over 2 million home loans. We also know that private-sector involvement in public affordable housing programs has led to more renters getting help in the private real estate market. Estimates show that since 1986, more than 3 million renters have received help via the Low Income Housing Tax Credit. A June 2020 Groundcover News article by Susan Beckett carried the title “Affordable housing projects underway will meet 10% of Washtenaw’s need.” LIHTC and their limitations were key components of that article.

I am encouraged by the private sector’s willingness to set aside a few apartments for affordable low income housing. However, I believe that local, state and federal governments should get back to the business of building more affordable public housing. The 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a major push to tear down all the high-rise public housing in places like Detroit and Chicago. It was true that those buildings were ravaged by crime, violence and drug gangs. But there should be opportunities to build low-rise alternatives near bus and train routes.

Recently, a key leader of the Tiny House Movement in Metro Ann Arbor challenged us to provide more explanation about the affordable housing crisis. Our historical perspectives will help somewhat. In Ann Arbor, the Mayor and the City Council put forward the Proposal C Affordable Housing Millage. It passed, and every year for about 20 years, \$6 million is

deposited in the City’s affordable Housing Trust Fund. The city’s Accessory Dwelling Units zoning variance improved the prospects for affordable housing.

The University of Michigan student body is now about 50,000. The number of U-M teaching and research staff has also increased, and consequently housing demands have skyrocketed. University of Toronto professor of management and urban planning Richard Florida gave a speech in 2017 about the coming urban crisis in Metro Ann Arbor. He suggested the following solution strategies:

1. A commitment to building more housing and more rental housing that is affordable;
 2. An investment in transit to connect declining suburbs with urban growth hubs;
 3. A base income tax; and
 4. Wage upgrades for service jobs, to increase productivity and workplace satisfaction.
- We hope the governments of Metro Ann Arbor and other urban cities and counties are listening.

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Funds will be used to purchase Christmas gifts and winter gear for Groundcover vendors

Holiday chicken salad

ELIZABETH BAUMAN
Groundcover contributor

Ingredients:

4 cups cubed cooked chicken breast
1 cup mayonnaise
1 tbsp paprika
1 ½ cups dried cranberries
1 cup chopped celery
2 green onions
½ cup minced green bell pepper
1 cup chopped pecans
1 tsp seasoning salt
Ground pepper to taste

Directions:

In a medium bowl mix mayonnaise with paprika and seasoning salt. Blend in dried cranberries, celery, bell pepper, onion and nuts. Add the chicken and mix well. Season with



pepper and chill overnight.

An easy, tasty dish to prepare during the holidays.



St. Francis of Assisi Parish

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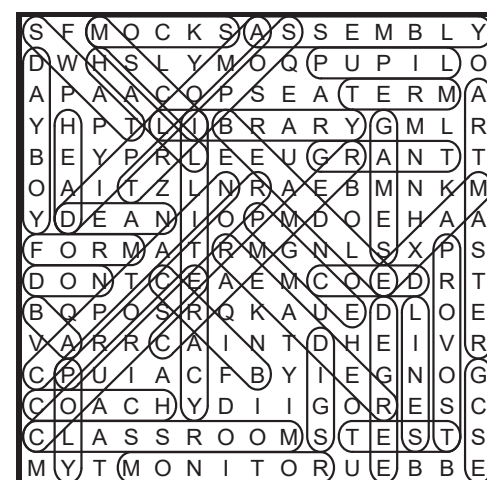
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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

6	2	1	8	9	7	4	3	5
4	9	3	1	2	5	7	6	8
7	8	5	3	4	6	9	2	1
1	5	4	2	6	3	8	7	9
8	6	2	5	7	9	1	4	3
9	3	7	4	1	8	2	5	6
3	1	8	7	5	4	6	9	2
5	7	6	9	8	2	3	1	4
2	4	9	6	3	1	5	8	7



Logic puzzle solutions:

1. Two weighings. First, pick 6 of the balls and weigh 3 against 3. This will tell you which group of 3 contains the heavy ball. Then take two balls from the heavy group and weigh them. If they don't balance, you have the heavy one. If they do, the heavy ball is the one you didn't weigh.

2. Fill the five-ounce cup, then use that to fill the three-ounce cup. Pour the three-ounce cup back into the jug, then pour the remaining two ounces from the five-ounce cup into the three-ounce cup. Fill the five-ounce cup from the jug again, then pour one ounce into the three-ounce cup to fill it. There are four ounces left in the five-ounce cup.

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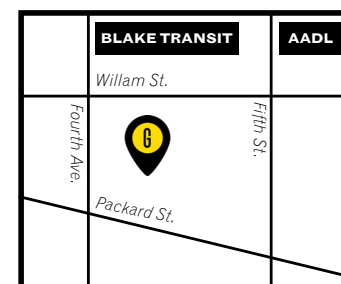


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